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BY THE COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

MAJOR GENERAL ERROL R. SCHWARTZ

COMMANDING GENERAL

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD

BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

March 23, 2010

Introduction

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and members of the subcommittee, for the opportunity to testify today on Snow Disasters for Local, State and Federal Governments in the National Capital Region: Response and Recovery Partnerships with FEMA. I will focus my comments on the District of Columbia National Guard and our support to the region during the historical back-to-back blizzards that hit the District in February.

The District of Columbia National Guard comprises both Army and Air National Guard components. Federal law charges the National Guard with dual state and federal missions. Those functions range from limited actions during non-emergency situations to full-scale law enforcement of martial law when local law enforcement officials can no longer maintain civil control. I would like to emphasize that our primary role is to support civilian authorities.

In the 53 states and territories, the governor is the commander in chief of the National Guard. Since we do not have a governor in the District, the President of the United States serves as our commander-in-chief. The authority to call-up the D.C. National Guard is delegated by the President and Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of the Army.

One of our primary missions in support of the District is to rapidly respond to requests for support from the Office of the Mayor by providing military, emergency and community support as outlined in the District's Emergency Response Plan. In the case of the emergency response to the recent blizzards, this plan proved to be very effective.

The District of Columbia requested support from the D.C. National Guard through the Commanding General during the blizzards. The Secretary of the Army approved the request for

the DC Guard to support the city. This occurred when the Mayor declared a snow emergency and provided a written request for support.

The DC National Guard supported the snow emergency response in and around the District of Columbia from February 5-15, 2010. This support came in the form of 19 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles, also known as Humvees, and 203 soldiers and airmen. During this period of support to the city, the DC National Guard conducted over 800 missions. These missions mainly entailed emergency transportation of essential emergency District government personnel and the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) Emergency Operations Center personnel to their duty locations and direct support to the DC Metropolitan Police Department and the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Services with emergency transportation of doctors and nurses to local hospitals. This support was necessary for the City's continuity of operations.

In preparation for disasters such as these, we have developed an all-hazards plan to respond to requests from federal and District authorities. In accordance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security *National Response Framework* dated January 2008, there are 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESF) that are nationally recognized. The District has added one of their own for a total of 16 ESFs. The District has requested that our units and personnel support eight of the 16 ESFs. When requested by the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, we will support:

- **ESF 1 – Transportation:** Provide intersection control support and transportation, infrastructure security, facilitate the transport of disaster-relief supplies, and assist in the evacuation or relocation of people during emergencies
- **ESF 2 – Communications:** Operate on designated radio frequencies that interface with the D.C. Emergency Operations Center, and provide a liaison to the operations center at the request of DCHSEMA

- **ESF 6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services:** Provide shelter, assist with security on roadways and in the designated shelters, facilitate transportation of disaster relief supplies and equipment, provide mobile kitchens and shower facilities and assist in the evacuation or relocation of victims
- **ESF 9 – Search and Rescue:** Provides search-and-rescue capability and temporary emergency shelters, support traffic control, emergency transportation, evacuation of civilian population, communications assistance, area security, protection from theft and looting, medical services, aircraft for medical evacuation and monitoring, surface radiation monitoring, radiation hazard plotting, wind and weather data, and control of reentry
- **ESF 10 – Oil and Hazardous Material Response:** Provide equipment and mobilize units to provide the following:
 - Traffic control
 - Emergency transportation
 - Evacuation of civilian population
 - Search and rescue
 - Communications assistance
 - Area security
 - Protection from theft and looting
 - Medical services
 - Aircraft for monitoring
 - Surface radiation monitoring
 - Radiation hazard plotting
 - Wind and weather data
 - Control of reentry
- **ESF 11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources:** Coordinate and provide mobile kitchen, feeding facilities and personnel, and assistance with delivery of bulk food and cooking supplies; and weather forecasting capabilities
- **ESF 13 – Public Safety and Security:** Provide manpower to civilian law enforcement to assist in management of the designated 142 critical intersections in the city, and with requested law enforcement requirements
- **ESF 16 – Donations and Volunteer Management:** Support safe collection, transportation and distribution of donated goods and services

During the recent blizzards, the District requested support under ESF 1, which is Transportation. However, we can expand our support listed under any of these ESFs according to the size and scope of the emergency and level of support requested by the District.

In support of the DCHSEMA, the DC National Guard Armory serves as an alternate emergency operations center. We are also prepared to support the city by partnering with the Joint Force Headquarters, National Capital Region, in coordinating with the Defense Department, and will coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security and its agencies such as FEMA, and other civilian agencies including the American Red Cross. At the request of the DCHSEMA, there are currently prepositioned FEMA and American Red Cross trailers in the parking lot of the Armory that contain disaster-relief supplies.

In times of emergency, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with each of the states in FEMA Region III ensures mutual aid, support and cooperation with Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. We focus on providing logistical support required to bring units from these states into the local area, including operational control, credentialing, food, shelter, equipment and transportation of National Guard support personnel.

The 56th Presidential Inauguration provides an excellent illustration of the support the National Guard brings to the table. During the inaugural period in January 2009, 7,000 National Guard personnel from more than 30 states were deployed inside the boundaries of the nation's capital, and another 3,000 were stationed just outside our borders. I never felt more proud of the Guard than I did during this entire event – before, during and after. With nearly two million people in and around the National Mall, there was not one arrest related to the largest inauguration in our nation's history. We accomplished this arduous task by coordinating our support with DCHSEMA and the myriad of law enforcement and civilian agencies involved in the event. We provided traffic and crowd control, logistical support, medical support, communications, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive detection capability, shelter, food, equipment and transportation.

Our DC National Guard Aviation units located at Davidson Army Airfield near Fort Belvoir, Virginia, are also key assets available to support civil authorities in a disaster. Last year, we received new UH-72 MEDEVAC helicopters for our 121st Medical Co. (Air Ambulance). These assets provide important medical-evacuation airlift capability.

Our Air Guard units on Joint Base Andrews, the home of our 113th Wing, also provide critical defense and airlift capability. One of our more critical, ongoing duties is the Air Sovereignty Alert mission, protecting the skies over the nation's capital. Since Sept. 11, 2001, our F-16 Fighter pilots and crews at Andrews have been on 24/7 alert, ready to respond at a moment's notice to any threat or violation of the airspace over the city.

We continue to train our full-time staff to quickly respond in the event of an emergency within the District of Columbia, primarily with our National Guard Response Force. We have trained more than 100 soldiers and airmen from our full-time staff to respond to emergencies within four hours of notification and maintain control until released or until follow-on forces arrive. The response force can support civil authorities with critical infrastructure protection and crowd control.

Another critical asset in the event of an emergency is our 33rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (CST). The CST is trained to respond quickly in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and-or explosive attack. Their job is to assess the situation and advise the civilian incident commander or military leadership of potential courses of action to minimize loss of life and property. The CST is also trained to respond to natural or manmade disasters. Their extensive training includes exercising with DCHSEMA, the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, Secret Service, FBI and other emergency responders.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the D.C. National Guard remains committed now more than ever to providing emergency support to the District of Columbia, whether it is in a snow emergency like the one we just experienced, or some other natural or manmade disaster. We would appreciate any support from this subcommittee to improve our ability to respond to an emergency and save lives. Thank you for asking me to come here today and for the chance to communicate our capabilities and requirements. Madam Chair, I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the subcommittee members might have.